**It’s Time for the New MTA to Take on Fare Policy**

**MTA Board Testimony**

**June 25, 2025**

Good morning! I’m Jack Connors, Research & Communications Associate at the Permanent Citizens Advisory Committee to the MTA, PCAC.

As we approach this summer’s fare increase, we’re hoping that the ‘business-like’ mindset that embodies The New MTA will be reflected in fare policies that do right by riders and allow the MTA to expand its customer base, particularly in subway deserts.

PCAC’s ideas include:

* A.M. peak discounts for senior, disabled, and Medicare-eligible riders on the LIRR and Metro-North.
* A discounted fare for 12-17-year-olds on the railroads.
* A weekly CityTicket that includes free transfers to subways and buses.
* Pushing the City to expand Fair Fares to 200% of the Federal Poverty Level and the railroads.

These policies are about fairness for riders, making the system cheaper for families and those on fixed incomes, but it’s also about your bottom line. CityTicket is a proven fiscal success, it’s boosted ridership at Bronx Metro-North stations as much as [166%](https://www.mta.info/document/173906) above pre-COVID levels and within the LIRR’s city terminal zone by [24%](https://www.youtube.com/live/SKskN6sCVXE?si=rGIDNm7uXTMZxE-x&t=4195).

Thanks to investments from Governor Hochul and the Legislature, there are 316 new M-9As coming to the LIRR and Metro-North and record on-time performance. Let’s capitalize by offering morefareoptions for riders in subway deserts instead of forcing them into three-leg transfers, dollar vans, and worst of all: single occupancy vehicles.

We should look towards authorities like SEPTA, far less resourced than the MTA, that added most regional rail stations to its weekly bus and subway pass at no additional cost two years ago. Such joint railroad-NYC Transit trips cost as must as $20 on the MTA.

These ideas aren’t farfetched; they were informed by conversations with many of you at the Board table to ensure their practicality. They’re supported by *dozens* of elected officials from Scarsdale to South Jamaica and organizations from the Business Council to Reinvent Albany, strange bedfellows.

We’ve been pushing these simple changes for years because you make the best case for transit by reducing silos between operating agencies to make it easier to ride – that’s the fundamental promise of OMNY, one we believe is still within reach. Preliminary results of our recent OMNY survey found riders agree with us: they overwhelmingly want more integrations with and transfers between our region’s transportation modes. Thank you.